

Hurricane Katrina Disaster Plan for Medication Refills and Replacements (Patient Information)

This notice is to provide Facts for New Orleans and Biloxi VAMC patients and VA staff regarding processes for obtaining prescription refills and replacement. As a result of Hurricane Katrina the computer systems at Biloxi and Jackson, Miss., are not connected to the VA Wide area Network. New Orleans is completely down and VA is moving the New Orleans medical data to Houston to set up temporary locations for accessing patient data. When Biloxi and Jackson have communication reconnected you can contact the medical centers directly. Until then, please read the following information.

1. Patients with an adequate supply of medication should request refills at their normal refill dates. The FDA has issued information on Drug Use and Safety for medications potentially damaged as a result of the hurricane. A copy is attached.
2. Patients may contact their local or regional postal service and inquire about services being provided or to establish a temporary address to forward mail in transit.
3. Local post offices will hold mail (including packages) up to 14 days for addresses impacted by a weather event. Patients may pick up these packages during this period.
Note: *The U.S. Postal Service has agreed to hold all mailings to the disaster areas for an extended period of time.*
4. Patients who have temporarily relocated may contact their nearest VA medical center to inquire about access to care and their prescription needs.
5. All VA Medical Centers will have limited access to patient information from Biloxi and New Orleans. In most cases the pharmacy will be able to fill your prescriptions. In certain circumstances a patient may be required to see a primary care provider to obtain a replacement prescription. Pharmacy is anticipating that the Information Systems will be able to restore the patient data records from the closed facilities in a short period of time.
6. Prescriptions not delivered due to interruption of postal services will be returned to the local VA medical center after 10 to 14 days if not picked up.
7. The CMOP program will work with the USPS to receive periodic updates on USPS delivery status. If your address has changed temporarily you must update this address at your nearest VA Medical Facility.
8. When you contact another VA new prescriptions will be entered for you in the local medical center. You will need to be registered at the medical center providing the care.